

REVOLUTIONIZING ARMY LEADER DEVELOPMENT

BY

COLONEL SHAWN E. REED
United States Army

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U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050

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REVOLUTIONIZING ARMY LEADER DEVELOPMENT

by

Colonel Shawn E. Reed
United States Army

Professor Cynthia E. Ayers
Project Adviser

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U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

ABSTRACT

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The Department of Defense (DoD) relies heavily on the rich and diverse cultural base of its professional officers in strategic level decision processes. To be effective, decision processes at this level must be made with explicit understanding and experience in the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental and Multinational (JIIM) domain. The Army, being the largest and most diverse of the service components, has the ways and means to redesign and reinvigorate these processes and improve a lagging Professional Military Education (PME) paradigm. The intent of this paper is to demonstrate why this redesign is important and ways in which it can be achieved.

REVOLUTIONIZING ARMY LEADER DEVELOPMENT

We have to develop leaders who understand that context matters. The Complexity of today's challenges and the uncertainties of tomorrow require a much broader approach to leader development and a clear understanding of the operational environment

—General Martin E. Dempsey, Commander, Army Training and Doctrine Command, October 2009¹

A central characteristic to success for both the Army and the Department of Defense (DoD) lies in its rich and diverse multi-component cultural base. The same characteristic is equally critical to success for the DoD's combined leadership construct, strategy development and policy implementation. The common, and more often vital, denominator at this level is the mid-grade and senior professional military leaders that define complex problem sets, determine their effects and produce recommendations for strategic leaders. The overarching challenge is that recommendations and decisions at the strategic level must be made with explicit experience and understanding of the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental and Multinational (JIIM) environment. This experience and knowledge begins with junior leader development models long before an officer is assigned to a level of joint or strategic importance. The Army lags in recognizing the fundamental and key linkages between junior officer level experiential development and senior leader joint and strategic requirements, resulting in degraded career-long developmental processes that are key to success in a 21st Century JIIM environment.

In order for the Army and DoD to continue to successfully meet contemporary and future challenges in an era of persistent conflict, Army officers must acquire and hone JIIM critical competencies earlier in their career development path. Army Professional Military Education (PME) design must be flattened and streamlined in

order to yield the highly qualified, multifunctional “pentathletes” that the Department of Defense desires.² This paper explores why Army Professional Military Education programs fall short in developing the JIIM qualified and culturally savvy leaders required in critical roles within the DoD and strategic arena. Further, this paper will show ways in which the Army can improve its PME through improved application of its three stated strategy pillars: Education, Training and Experience.

United States Army leadership is recognized throughout the world as an indelible component of enduring American military strength. In the last decade, however, critical thought surrounding the Army Leadership Development Strategy (ALDS) has been growing steadily more urgent. The Army Capstone Concept for ALDS, published in 2009, outlines detailed contemporary and future leadership core competencies which are required in order for the United States to retain decisive military advantage in a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous (VUCA) global environment. This strategy, developed by a host of stakeholders from both inside and outside of the Army, reflects immense effort, insight and forethought to more creative dimensions of leader development. The Army’s ability to institute the critical elements of JIIM design into its education, training and experience programs earlier in the professional development cycle of its officer corps remains a significant challenge.

Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) remains the principle agent for developing core individual and institutional competencies among its junior and mid-grade professional leaders. Recognizing the need to better develop contemporary and future leaders more adept in JIIM critical competencies, the Army could substantially improve overall JIIM competency development and management throughout the

Department of Defense by assuming the lead role in JIIM professional military education for all service components. In order to do this, the Army must first transform its development doctrine to a more agile and flexible design that builds JIIM competencies as a matter of priority throughout a leaders career; and not only when that officer reaches the field grade ranks. Additionally, regardless of the fact that Joint Forces Command (JFC) retains explicit oversight for the development and implementation of joint level training and doctrine for all DoD services and agencies, the Army has arrived at a crucial juncture in its evolution and must acquire and develop JIIM competencies as its fundamental institutional, experiential and individual development foundation in order to achieve its desired end state for 21st Century leadership development.

The most critical facet of this design improvement is realigning principle cultural attributes as they relate to civil-military and interagency relationships and experience to better enhance the overall state of professionalism of the Army officer corps. The center of gravity for this transition remains the Army's powerful cultural base, which relies heavily on its strongest attributes of agility, adaptability, and innovation. The question is whether the Army can successfully shed its decades-old baseline learning model that is bound by outmoded business practices, outdated technology and a static institutional comfort zone that produces limited innovation.³

Historical Context

To better understand contemporary and future developmental models it is important to understand the roots of military professional development from a historical perspective. While it is relatively common knowledge that education and the military profession have been inherently intertwined since the days of Thucydides, contemporary United States military professional education is best envisioned when

viewed through the lens of mid-19th century U.S. domestic cultural bias of its military. Upon conclusion of the American Civil War, U.S. congressional policy mandated sharp reductions not only in military expenditures, but also initiated wholesale rejection with regard to investing in the human capital aspects of a professional military.⁴ Many historians mark this period of time as the lowest point in American military history, often referring to this period immediately following the Civil War as the “The Army’s Dark Ages” and the “Period of Naval Stagnation.”⁵

What is most important about this period of time for contemporary leader education lies in the cultural development of the officer corps that ensued specifically as a result of that isolation and rejection. It was during this period that the officer corps experienced its most tangible and positive growth as a distinctive entity with profound military character.⁶ Further, this era in U.S Military history marked the initial period of cultural and ideological separation between the Soldier and the state which resulted in what Samuel Huntington describes as the critical transformation of the citizen-soldier to the professional officer corps.⁷ Despite high and low ebbs of the military profession since, the merits of that period in professional officer corps maturation remain the center of gravity in today’s officer corps, a distinctly critical feature of which is the civil military relationship that resulted. Additional features founded during this period were the distinct and powerful traits of adaptability, agility and innovation, which allowed for critical thought and advancement of the military that was separate but in support of the state.

These 19th century facets of military professionalism, specifically relating to career long PME learning, are clearly the preamble to what has become the greatest

military in the history of warfare. Of particular consideration is how this level of professional militarism was forged in the face of extremely tumultuous political and cultural times, as well as how the United States military turned such a deficit into success by adapting and codifying its cultural base through professional military education and the development of its officer corps. In the 21st Century, an era of persistent conflict, the Army must readdress these core competencies to be more inclusive of historical lessons of cultural agility, adaptability and innovation that formed professional officer development in the 19th Century. Applying foundational historical lessons of contemporary civil-military relations to future Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental and Multinational doctrine can serve as valuable “way points” for the Army’s leader development strategy. However, answers to the “way ahead” for 21st Century leader development require adjustments in the Army’s powerful organizational culture of today, a culture that may be more prone to espousing such traits than actuating them.

Army Organizational Culture

Organizational culture, which permeates every level within any professional entity, constitutes both the lifeblood and the spirit of the organization. Cultural theorists postulate that cultural norms, values, beliefs and assumptions provide the critical purpose, direction and motivation for organizations as well as their members.⁸ In his study of the role of organizational culture for the U.S. Army’s development of leaders, James Pierce examines the linkages of culture to the competencies, managerial skills and professional leadership capabilities inherent in contemporary Army leaders.⁹ Pierce postulates that the ability of a professional organization, in this case the U.S. Army, to

develop future leaders in a manner that enhances readiness to cope with a VUCA environment and internal uncertainty depends almost entirely on its organizational culture.¹⁰ He does this by examining individual, organizational and institutional factors to determine levels of congruency between current Army development programs and its professional organizational culture.

Pierce's research determined that there is in fact incongruence between Army professional development programs and its professional leadership; and that this gap results from an overarching "corporate" cultural paradigm that requires inflexible rigidity in the name of stability, formality, efficiency and competitiveness.¹¹ Further, Pierce's research suggests that the answer to achieving a higher level of stability, efficiency and competitiveness lies in the Army's ability to expand leader development programs that emphasize flexibility attuned to traits representative of those found in highly successful corporate organizations who rely inherently on risk taking, flexibility, creativity, and most importantly invest in long term human capital.¹² The Army finds it particularly difficult to measure value associated with risk taking, innovation and creativity. Partially, this can be attributed to the decades old modeling of how we assess performance of officers and organizations. More pointedly, and despite almost a decade of undisputable research, analysis and assessment that Army education systems are lagging, this difficulty is resultant of cultural biases fixated on the Army's traditional hegemonic approach and systemic inflexibility within its programs, policies and institutions.

Despite healthy espousal of how the Army needs and encourages these traits among its leadership, it continues to allow the proliferation of archaic institutional development models to dominate its leader development strategy. The overarching

reason is intrinsically linked to an Army culture that perpetuates a cycle of caution and overreliance on stability and control over decentralized, innovative and adaptive leadership methodology.¹³ The result is that despite recognizing an urgent need to modernize its leadership development strategy, the Army does not appear to recognize that its efforts to execute such modernization are stymied almost exclusively by its inability to change itself outside of cataclysmic events such as conflict or war.

This stagnation partially derives from cultural specific heuristic norms that drive leader development and management policy to focus too heavily on immediate demands that are designed to support short term gains—gains that come at the expense of long term development, experience, and ultimately critical expertise in the JIIM environment. The Army’s “Capstone Concept” leader development strategy seeks to grow Army junior and midlevel leaders through the application of three stated critical pillars: Education, Training, and Experience. Collectively, these pillars are designed to develop agile, adaptive and anticipatory military and civilian leaders that can effectively operate in a complex Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational environment.¹⁴ Yet, none of these programs, independently or collectively, espouse or actuate tangible JIIM ideology within their respective programs of instruction or implementation.

The challenge is that while the programs associated with each pillar excel in fundamental leadership qualities, they all lack significantly in the investment of long term experience and expertise within and beyond the current joint environment. Joint experience and expertise must be introduced to Army leadership earlier in their career development cycles in order to become instinctive by the time they reach positions of

strategic importance. Unlike the past, the 21st Century environment will require strategic level understanding and competencies to be mastered by leaders at a much earlier time in their career cycles.

This challenge is further exacerbated by Army cultural paralysis spawned by years of rigid enforcement of stereotypical, standardized models that ultimately create a “controlling” environment of systems and processes. In the case for enhanced development of Army leaders in the JIIM arena, this controlling environment is explicitly dominated by the Joint Forces Warfighting Center, a separate and distinct component of the former Joint Forces Command. Despite recognition of this phenomenon, the Army has been slow to make institutional, organizational or individual adjustments that effectively infuse joint systems and processes into Army specific leadership development programs rather than relying on external commands and organizations.

Contemporary Strategy

The Army recognizes the need to transform its professional learning model to one more consistent with a rapidly changing and volatile environment.¹⁵ It recently published Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525-8-2, *The Army Learning Concept For 2015* (ALC), which focuses specifically on enhancing its approach to the professional competitive learning environment and achieving the goal of preparing leaders capable of making the “right” kinds of adaptation and innovation needed to stay ahead of U.S. adversaries.¹⁶ Further, TRADOC PAM 525-8-2 attempts to nest the overall framework and themes of the *Army Capstone Concept*, *The Army Operating Concept*, *The Army Training Concept* and the *Army Leader Development*

Strategy into a consolidated, concise learning model methodology which can be used as a doctrinal roadmap for all service components.

The ALC addresses critical organizational areas for improvement as well as identifies 21st Century Soldier competencies that must be cultivated across all inter-service components and at every level in an individual's career.¹⁷ The stated goal is the immediate implementation of an advanced learning model to develop capacity for accelerated learning that transcends current gaps from the individual level to the organizational level.¹⁸ Even if the ALC is implemented immediately, there are gaps remaining in Army strategy related to the specific development of leaders in the much needed JIIM arena. There is little argument that the Army's educational paradigm continues to produce leaders savvy in baseline service component doctrine, but falls decisively short of breathing life into cross-cultural programs that provide critical JIIM knowledge and experience commensurate with sister services or environmental requirements. This slows individual and collective development that ultimately results in senior leaders being placed into JIIM positions of responsibility without required prerequisite skills.

Strategy Gaps

For the past two decades, U.S. successes in war and conflict reflect the effectiveness of the joint military force and its warfighting potential.¹⁹ In 2009, the RAND Corporation published a detailed study outlining the effectiveness of joint officer management governed by Title IV of the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 (GNA).²⁰ Its research indicated that while the DoD has improved in its development and management of the joint force, it needs to evolve from its current static format to a more

dynamic approach that broadens its definitions and allows for multiple paths to growing joint officers.²¹ While the joint strategic plan acknowledges that successful joint operations no longer rest in the simple integration or interoperability of military services, but rather with complete synchronization and synergistic employment of multi-component forces from services, agencies, and nations,²² it does not address or provide any of the service components with tangible means to achieve its ends. This falls directly on the shoulders of the respective service components. For the Army this means redesigning crucial elements of its overarching capstone strategy (ways) and aligning appropriate resources to support each of its three pillars of Education, Training and Experience.

To achieve DoD intent, the Army Learning Concept must focus more closely at creating JIIM synchronized and integrated leader development programs (means) vertically and horizontally within the Army, but with an early and consistent immersion in JIIM doctrine, schooling, and experience within the interservice, interagency and multinational environments. The ALC does well in identifying nine critical 21st Century Soldier Competencies (Character and Accountability, Comprehensive Fitness, Adaptability and Initiative, Lifelong Learning, Teamwork and Collaboration, Communication and Engagement, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Cultural and JIIM Competence, and Tactical and Technical Competence),²³ but it only provides a cursory description of required cultural and JIIM competencies, and offers little expansion as to how the Army intends on achieving this most critical competency. Further, the ALC offers little tangible evidence within its Proposed Action Plan or Implications appendices that it understands that the center of gravity of its proposals

rests with exposing junior and mid-grade leaders to JIIM knowledge, training and experience conclusively in conjunction with Army baseline component models.

Education

Educational models at the strategic level of leadership focus predominantly on skill sets and competencies that are critical to success in volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environments (VUCA). Yet, developmental models that should be preparing leaders for this environment ignore the fact that contemporary direct and organizational leaders also deal with VUCA aspects, albeit to a lesser degree. It is imperative that Army developmental models emphasize related threads between these three levels of leadership and that each level shares perpetually common VUCA themes experienced within the JIIM environment. As it is, contemporary and future Army leaders are faced with gaps between each of these levels that contribute to slower learning and degraded application of their experiences in a way that reinforces their development towards skills and competencies required to be effective at, or in support of JIIM-level leadership.

Despite several years of focused efforts in revamping basic and midlevel leadership development models like the phased Basic Officers Leader Course (BOLC I, II and III) and the Captains Career Course (CCC), there is still little sign of successful infusion of serious JIIM level training or exposure to our junior and midlevel officer corps. Army policy argues that leaders at this level do not require education or experience associated with JIIM responsibilities because traditional career glide paths do not see them serving in such capacities until they achieve mid to senior field grade level standing.

Almost a decade of perpetual combat clearly disproves any such premise. Company level commanders, of every branch, experience considerable exposure to joint tactical, multiagency and multicultural operations in operational theaters of combat. These experiences are apparent in every aspect of contemporary military operations now and will assuredly continue to be the center of gravity for future operations as well. Support to special operations missions, employing Air Force or Navy EOD assets, employing Air Force fixed wing assets, supporting department of state entities, assisting foreign national police and army forces are simple, yet common environments our junior leaders face every day on the contemporary battlefield.

The recurring theme here is that Army lieutenants, captains and majors all consistently serve in low complexity JIIM environments; yet we have not codified programs of instruction within our institutional development framework focused on cross-cultural practices, techniques and procedures.

This example extends to the Army's Intermediate-Level Education (ILE) model as well. While ILE does conduct Joint Professional Military Education, and does offer JPME Phase I credentialing, the primary instruction emphasizes little more than easily observable and commonly known artifacts in service culture vice current joint doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures. Field grade officers graduating from ILE quickly find themselves performing as battalion level operations officers, executive officers or staff officers at the brigade combat team or division level. All of these critical positions are heavily burdened with responsibilities closely associated with JIIM knowledge, experience and integration. The result, more often than not, is latency in performance

as the officer requires months of valuable time to learn the dynamics of this complex environment.

Additionally, professional officers graduating from ILE should exit this course with a Masters-level education. Masters programs are offered while attending ILE, but they are above and beyond the baseline curriculum and require students to expend their personal time at the expense of family and personal needs. In a peacetime environment this is much less of an issue and quite acceptable, but when considering the sacrifices given by the Army community at large over the past decade, and with little relief in deployment tempo on the near horizon, this opportunity more often falls by the wayside as students choose to optimize the little time they have with their families. Unfortunately, the Army perceives this opportunity to obtain a Masters at ILE as a purely individual responsibility.

Training and Experience

Training and Experience represent the remaining pillars of the Army's leader development framework. They are separate and distinct as categories, but closely interrelated in their applicability to leader development. The 2009 Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO) clearly defines four conceptual goals in guiding future force development: (1) Establish a common framework for military professionals for thinking about future joint operations, (2) Visualizing future joint operations for policymakers and others with interest in employment of joint military forces, (3) Establish a conceptual foundation for subordinate joint and Service concepts, and (4) Motivating and guiding the study, experimentation and evaluation of joint concepts and capabilities.²⁴

The Army's 2009 Posture statement furthers this concept in addressing the need to have agile and adaptive leaders that are capable of operating in complex JIIM environments. It further espouses that it will achieve development of enhanced leaders and forces by streamlining the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) processes, providing a more effective enterprise management approach, and adhering to a requirements-based process versus the traditional desires-based process.²⁵ While both the Department of Defense and Army statements are congruent with regard to addressing the direction leader development needs to go, both espouse methodology and direction that is not being actuated at either level or across service components.

Similar to the Army's challenges in institutional flexibility, Army tactical training doctrine focuses too heavily on service component skills under the combined arms paradigm. The Army develops incredibly capable, competent and savvy junior and mid-grade tactical leaders, as evidenced by undisputed combined arms tactical superiority on today's battlefields. The shortfall is apparent when you apply the same principles for combined arms success to a JIIM operational or strategic model. Tactical commanders and operational planners have limited success on the battlefield when they fail to employ synchronized assets in combined and mutually supporting fashion. Similar results occur when operational and strategic leaders fail to apply the same principles to JIIM-level coordination and cooperation to achieve strategic-level results. This failure can be linked almost explicitly back to inadequate institutional and personal career training and experience.

Further, despite the fact that doctrinal tactics, techniques and procedures focus heavily on understanding and employing JIIM assets, senior company grade and junior

field grade officers are not afforded consistent nor quality exposure to joint or interagency training environments before they are promoted and placed in critical positions within the JIIM arena. This “gap” in JIIM development can be seen frequently at the tactical level as both individuals and units rarely train or coordinate with JIIM-level assets before being overwhelmed with their capabilities and needs in a combat zone. The larger detriment of this kind of an experience is that these same leaders will likely not see an opportunity to work within the JIIM arena until they are senior lieutenant colonels, who are expected to be educated and savvy in JIIM-level systems and processes. This represents a tremendous gap in the Army leader development strategy and can easily be traced back to outdated personnel management models, systems and cultural stagnation. For the Army, this also often means that many of its officers are less competitive for key career enhancing and force enabling positions in comparison to their sister service peers.

Joint manning requirements for the Army are also considered “crème of the crop” priority assignments, held in reserve for a very limited number of junior officers that meet specific, yet illusive requirements. The result is an Army culture that views joint billets in the army as “special,” and thus reserved only for those officers that achieve “special standing” predicated largely on achievements that fall outside mainstream Army criteria. Conversely, the Navy, Air Force and Marines qualify these critical joint positions more as a matter of standard requirement; or rather, a position that is necessary as the norm in order to move into the lower-level senior leader JIIM assignments. Recognizing this philosophical imbalance, the Army would benefit greatly by redefining its selection criteria for joint billets and increasing its numbers of junior officers to assignments in the

joint and multiagency environments. Better yet, the Army could easily establish its own prerequisite criteria and training programs to enhance joint quality and quantity presented to its officer corps without being completely dependent on external DoD commands through adherence to redefined principles.

For the Army, the single step of moving theory into action remains the most complex of challenges in advancing full-spectrum leadership development. This is largely due to a widely recognized cultural mythology that espousing a plan of action is equal to executing.²⁶ The Army often puts immense effort into designing programs and policies but frequently moves to the next “crisis” too soon—well before its espoused intent can be actualized. This is most prevalent with regard to enhancing joint training and experiential opportunities for junior and mid-grade leadership as well as organizations.

Perhaps the most salient reason the Army falls short in advancing personnel management and PME systems and processes lies in what many consider “cultural paralysis.” This occurs when we recognize that institutional methods no longer meet the realistic demands and requirements of the force, and do not possess the systemic agility or flexibility to adapt quickly enough to make improvements or changes that are relevant to current or future challenges. As an example, contemporary junior leaders in every generation tend to be more capable in technological and conceptual comprehension than those generations that came before them. The reasons can be attributed to the simple fact that learning models, exposure and practical experience are presented earlier in their developmental cycles. If officers learn faster in each generation, then the expectation should be that doctrinal and institutional models for

learning would at least follow suit, teaching more advanced concepts, aligning experiences, and placing officers in more complex assignments much earlier in their career cycles.

Unfortunately, while the Army maintains a heavy emphasis on imperatives focused on inter-branch experience, it has difficulty in extending this same application of criteria to the JIIM arena. The result is a perpetual cultural cycle that is more vested in itself as a service component than in the larger DoD JIIM culture.

Recommended Models for Improvement

While the Army's contemporary strategy for refocusing its leader development modeling espouses exceptional methodology, it has not followed through with adapting existing institutional, experiential and individual growth processes in support of its end state. The Army's ADLS methodology for developing leaders is extremely detailed in concept. Its imperatives, however, fail to bind institutions, cohorts and sister services in realizing its vision. The Army possesses the ways and the means to close current gaps in its leadership development strategy. Before it can achieve this, the Army must reconsider its founding roots and re-embrace the true meaning of adaptability and innovation. Foremost, this means accepting drastic changes to its hegemonic culture with regards to institutional policies and procedures.

Secondly, the Army must face the fact that ignoring its current predicament of developmental stagnation will assuredly result in profound degradation within its junior, mid-grade and senior leader ranks in supporting national security strategy. The operational environment continues to evolve so rapidly and dynamically that current JIIM educational models simply cannot maintain relevant pace. Further, while the Army

continues to grapple with ineffective personnel management processes to provide cohort officer populations with basic joint experience, the JIIM environment itself has taken new shape and is rapidly transcending contemporary competencies taught in institutional settings.

Lastly, the Army puts immense effort into its iconic “One Team” slogan, but remains static in pursuing tangible integration of Reserve Component Forces. Both the Army Reserve and the National Guard rely heavily on their own models for leadership development and are often left out of higher end, JIIM-level training programs due to unbalanced TEMPO requirements, separate career glide paths and inaccessibility to active Army schooling, training and experience opportunities. To effectively rebalance the Army, and successfully inculcate JIIM-level competencies across the entire spectrum of DoD services, U.S. Army Reserve Force education models must be aligned with both DoD and Army development strategy from junior officers to strategic leaders.

Precepts of Revolutionizing Army Leader Development

My research demonstrates that current Army leader development strategy is not congruent with stated DoD methodology or 21st Century national security requirements. The Current Army Learning Concept proposes exceptional methodology for advancements in redefining and implementing leader development strategy, but clearly states that these requirements need to be implemented immediately.²⁷ Immediate implementation of this entire concept is not feasible without wholesale changes to current Army-wide and DoD systems, processes and policies. Considering the sheer width and depth of change that is required to infuse advanced learning and experience

methodology into the operational system, I propose incremental changes in the form of precepts that govern current and future Army learning strategy.

Leadership continues to be the most important precept in revolutionizing the Army's leader development strategy. More importantly, the critical factor that leadership must influence is organizational and institutional implementation. It is no longer "good enough" to espouse an end-state without sufficient ways and means to achieve it. While the brightest and most capable architects within the Army continue to engineer substantial gains in leader development methodology, the responsibility for follow-through rests with combined leadership committed to its implementation.

The first step in this process is acceptance that Army junior and mid-grade leaders have an extremely critical role in the success of DoD JIIM operational design and performance. Every leader in the Army should begin their developmental cycles with a robust understanding of the joint community fundamentals and elements of the JIIM environment. This can be accomplished simply by integrating current joint concepts, methodology, and Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPS) into already existing educational models for Lieutenants, Captains and Majors. Army leadership must educate itself within the depth and width of joint doctrine and policy at the earliest levels of professional military education, and not rely exclusively on operationally focused joint commands. Additionally, the Army must re-embrace the concept of mastering finite fundamentals versus its current "jack-of-all-trades" posture. Mastering the basic tenants of leadership, technology and joint fundamentals would exponentially increase the capability levels of the junior and mid-grade officer corps.

Secondly, end wholesale reliance on Joint Forces Training Command for full spectrum joint level training. While joint assignments may require JFC approval, there is little reason why the Army cannot adopt and implement JIIM baseline development criteria within its existing curriculums. The Army needs to take the lead within the DoD in redesigning and expanding its capstone concept for joint leader education. To do this the Army must place the critical principles of the joint capstone concept as its primary principles. This is not a suggestion to abandon current Army capstone principles, but rather to enhance them through expanded exposure to JIIM-level doctrine and concepts. Every Program of Instruction (POI) within the Army's critical pillars of education, training and experience should be reflective of joint doctrine and curriculum; and each of these pillars should maintain a healthy cross-level program of exposure for leaders to experience "jointness," whether it be from joint instructors, joint classrooms or joint assignments.

Third, the Army must recalculate how it espouses and conducts institutional self-adjustment before, during and after conflicts. The Army remains exceptional at identifying and capitalizing on lessons learned at the tactical and operational levels, but has considerable difficulty in rapidly effecting crucial changes to the echelons of PME within institutional settings. In most cases, junior, mid-grade and senior leaders attending any given institutional training curriculum are more knowledgeable of current doctrinal practices, and have more experiential knowledge than the instructors. This creates a severe gap in the ability of the institution to accomplish its learning goals, and further creates points of conflict between institutions, instructors and students that degrade the overall learning experience of the student. Experienced leadership that

possesses the optimal traits and skills associated with teaching and instructing should be identified and streamlined into the institutional arena as a matter of priority and practice. This would provide a catalyst at the lowest level within institutional transformation; and conducted cyclically, it would provide a constant means of access and transfer of critical, up-to-date knowledge for students.

Lastly, the Army needs to revamp its assignment and promotion criteria with regard to balanced duration of assignments to duty stations. Current personnel policy values stability at respective duty locations over development of the officer. This equates to allowing many leaders the option of remaining at one duty assignment for upwards of a decade (essentially “homesteading”), which creates complications across the full spectrum of operational readiness, combat effectiveness and individual development. Prior to 2000, the Army exercised extreme control over assignment duration predicated on balanced imperatives that forced full-spectrum development of an officer by mandating follow-on assignments that would further enhance leadership qualities and capabilities. An example of this was the Infantry’s “heavy versus light” imperatives. This model forced the leader to gain experience in both heavy units as well as light units for the sole purpose of rounding that leader in all aspects of infantry operations, tactics, techniques and procedures. Since 2001, the Army has lost its ability to manage based on balanced imperatives and the result is a stovepipe effect that limits the broadening experiences for leadership as well as the Army as a whole.

There is risk associated with adopting these recommendations. The first of which relates to what the Army refers to as the “multifunctional” leader, or one that is essentially a “jack-of-many-trades” and possesses mediocre skill sets across a broad

spectrum. This phenomenon occurred as a result of an explicit increase in requirements levied upon the officer corps shortly after 9/11. Multifunctional expertise was clearly a requirement to meet the demands of a rapidly changing combat environment as the Army developed its current core counterinsurgency doctrine; but it also served to erode fundamental expertise within each of the branches. For the 21st Century environment, the Army needs to readopt systems of developing leaders that are masters within their component branch assignment areas. This clearly means accepting that Army leadership, specifically at the company and junior field grade level, must reduce focus on being “jacks-of-all-trades” and commit to reestablishing itself along its historic lines of branches that are replete with technical and tactical experts.

A second risk lies in revamping the Army culture itself. While the goal remains becoming more joint and building leaders more adept in JIIM-level environments, the byproduct could easily be one of a watered-down Army culture that loses ties with its rich and historic culture. Some of this erosion is already evident in the Army’s 2002 internal effort to foster a culture that transcends branch boundaries. By adopting the current Army Combat Uniform, and intentionally dropping branch insignia from being displayed on the uniform, it inadvertently eroded the historical comradeship and pride within each branch. Similarly, in adopting a joint culture, the Army risks compromising its rich and long line of heritage at the expense of a more jointly focused leader development culture.

Conclusion

Despite being the largest and most capable service component within the Department of Defense, the Army continues to lag in its ability to adjust professional

military education models rapidly enough to maintain pace with 21st Century national security requirements. This is most apparent when examining junior and mid-grade leader development PME models, and can be attributed mostly to intra-service cultures that create and perpetuate inflexible theory of action. Furthermore, this inflexibility is exacerbated at the most critical junctures within the Army service component career cycle development of its junior and mid-grade leadership. This results in static development of programs and individual leaders who ultimately will assume the mantle of senior leaders within the DoD. Despite acknowledgement that the Army needs to realign its learning strategy to reflect and inculcate critical elements of the JIIM environment, it maintains a legacy pace driven by outmoded institutional learning doctrine and practices. With current technology advances, overarching experience drawn from a decade at war, and a virtual entirety of senior leadership that vocalizes the need to change, the Army could easily assume the mantle of being the most effective, experienced and knowledgeable Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental and Multinational training organization within the DoD. It simply has to change its culture from one that is myopically inter-focused to one that embraces “jointness” at every level within its PME developmental cycles.

Endnotes

¹ Remarks by General Martin E. Dempsey, Commanding General, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), at the Association of the United States Army's Chapter Presidents' Dinner, Washington, DC, October 4, 2009.

² Francis J. Harvey and General Peter J. Schoomaker, *A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army, Fiscal Year 2007*, Posture Statement Presented to the 110th Cong., (Washington DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 14 February, 2007). Addendum B.

³ U.S. Department of the Army, *The United States Army Learning Concept for 2015*, TRADOC PAM 535-8-2 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, September 14, 2010), 2.

⁴ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957), 229.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., 230.

⁸ James G. Pierce, *Is The Organizational Culture Of The U.S. Army Congruent With The Professional Development Of Its Senior Leader Officer Corps?*, *The Letort Papers*, (September 2010): xiii.

⁹ Ibid., 14.

¹⁰ Ibid., 15.

¹¹ Ibid., 101.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., v.

¹⁴ Pete Geren and General George W. Casey, *A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army, Fiscal Year 2009*, Posture Statement Presented to the 111th Cong., (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 7 May, 2009), 11.

¹⁵ U.S. Department of the Army, *The United States Army Learning Concept for 2015*, 2.

¹⁶ Ibid., i.

¹⁷ Ibid., ii.

¹⁸ Ibid., iii.

¹⁹ Margaret C. Harrell et al., *A Strategic Approach To Joint Officer Management* (Santa Monica, California: RAND Corporation, MG-886-OSD, 2009). xix.

²⁰ Public Law 99-433, *Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986*, 1 October, 1986.

²¹ U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Joint Officer Development Has Improved, But a Strategic Approach is Needed* (Washington, DC: US Government Accountability Office, 2002), quoted in Margaret C. Harrell et al, *A Strategic Approach to Joint Officer Management* (Santa Monica, California: 2009). 2.

²² U.S. Department of Defense, *Strategic Plan for Joint Officer Management and Joint Professional Military Education*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, 2006)., 2.

²³ U.S. Department of the Army, *The United States Army Learning Concept for 2015*, 13.

²⁴ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations 2009* (Washington DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff 2009), iii.

²⁵ Pete Geren and General George W. Casey, *A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army, Fiscal Year 2009*, Posture Statement Presented to the 111th Cong., (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 7 May, 2009), 12.

²⁶ This is an opinion of how the organizational Army quantifies espoused theory versus theory of action; is determined by twenty years of personal experience at the tactical and operational levels. Outside of the tactical combat arena, the measure of success is largely weighted on having a written plan versus executing that plan.

²⁷ U.S. Department of the Army, *The United States Army Learning Concept for 2015*, 2.

